

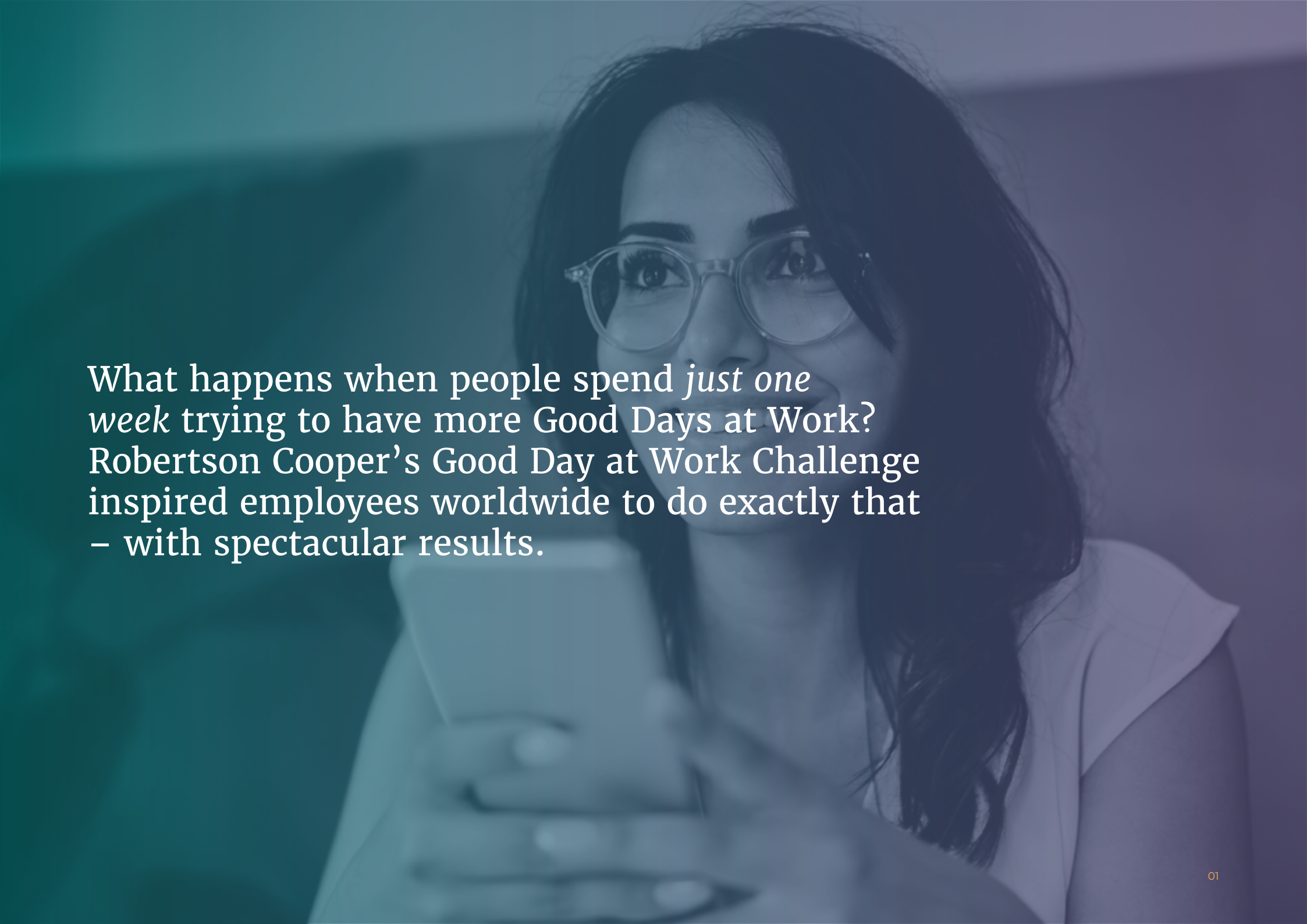


The Good Day at Work Challenge

— Gimmick or game-changer?

GOOD DAY AT WORK POWERED BY robertsoncooper

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A woman with dark hair and glasses is looking down at a smartphone she is holding. The image has a teal and purple color overlay. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

What happens when people spend *just one week* trying to have more Good Days at Work? Robertson Cooper's Good Day at Work Challenge inspired employees worldwide to do exactly that – with spectacular results.

Introduction.

What makes a Good Day at Work?

Some days, you'll finish work and know instinctively that you've had "a good day." But that instinct doesn't help you figure out **how to make it happen more often.**

At Robertson Cooper, we've put **decades of research** into understanding exactly what makes a Good Day at Work. Led by some of the brightest thinkers in the field, our team of analysts have sifted through tens of thousands of responses to the question, "What does a good day at work mean for you?" to develop **the industry's richest definition** of the components that contribute to a Good Day at Work.

We know that the best days contain **four essential elements:**

- ✓ Experiencing positive emotions
- ✓ Feeling connected
- ✓ Achieving tasks
- ✓ Performing meaningful work

Simply put, if a **work environment enables** employees to experience these four elements, and if an **employee grasps that opportunity**, it leads to more good days. **Which is great for both employees and businesses.**

Our research shows that every extra Good Day at Work generates:



A 9% increase in
productivity



A 10% increase in
advocacy for your
organisation



An 11% increase in
job satisfaction



A 12% reduction in the
intention to leave



Six fewer days of
presenteeism per year



Five fewer days of
sickness absence per
year

A background image showing two people, a woman with curly hair on the left and a man on the right, both looking down at a screen. The image has a teal and purple color overlay. There are semi-transparent geometric shapes: a large circle on the left and a rectangle in the center.

Section one

What was the Good Day at Work Challenge?

Section one: What was the Good Day at Work Challenge?

Backed by our proven research, we wanted to show people they could create more Good Days at Work through **simple, conscious and intentional action**. So we designed a free challenge for organisations and their employees: complete four simple, focused tasks set by Robertson Cooper's Business Psychologists over the course of a week, and see what difference it makes to their experience of work.

By the end of the challenge, **we wanted to demonstrate two things to the participants:**

1. Regardless of the environment, **they always retain some control** over their experience of work.
2. It's quick and **easy to develop new habits** that make a real difference to long-term wellbeing.



challenge

Here's a summary of the tasks we asked employees to complete...

01

Task 1:
Generate positive emotions

"Consciously take 10 minutes out of your day to generate some positive emotions."

Confident, curious, amazed, inspired, satisfied, happy – the **positive emotions** people can create in a working day, even momentarily, all contribute to a Good Day at Work. This task was about asking them to take a little time to do just that.

02

Task 2:
Get a difficult task done

"Dedicate just 10 minutes to something you've been putting off doing because it feels hard."

For some people, it may sound idyllic to laze around at work all day, but when it comes to having Good Days at Work, **checking off tasks on a to-do list** is a sure-fire winner. It provides a tremendous sense of satisfaction, and this task was set up to help employees achieve exactly that.

03

Task 3:
Strengthen your work relationships

"Take the first step to building a positive and fulfilling working relationship with someone."

When people develop a meaningful connection with their teams, colleagues or customers where they can **express ideas, be themselves and feel accepted**, more Good Days at Work will follow. This task supported employees in **strengthening their social bonds at work**.

04

Task 4:
Find meaning in your work

"Using our questionnaire, identify the meaning and purpose of your current job."

While they can't eliminate every monotonous work task, employees can take time to **notice when completed tasks contribute positively to something bigger**. As they do, they're heading for more Good Days at Work. This task was all about **rediscovering and reinforcing the purpose of each individual's role**.



Section two

What did the challenge reveal?



Section two: What did the challenge reveal?

Simply by carrying out four quick, targeted activities during a single week, **people changed their experience of work** significantly, creating almost an **extra half a day more Good Days at Work**, on average. At the end of the challenge, our participants reported enjoying 3.95 Good Days per week against 3.5 days before the challenge began. **That's 12.9% more Good Days per week, per person.**

4.1
4.1% more productivity

4.5
4.5% more advocacy

5.0
5% more job satisfaction

5.4
5.4% less intention to leave

Given the employee and business benefits we've already highlighted, imagine what this would translate to if people brought a tiny bit more attention to looking after their workplace wellbeing every week!



Section two: What did the challenge reveal? continued...

The participants also reported **improvements in every area** of the challenge they worked on:

26
26% increase in
positive emotions

27
27% increase in task
achievement

4.5
4.5% increase in feeling
connected

08
8% increase in
meaningful work

All of that achieved, for free, from just a few minutes' focus every week. **Where might a concerted effort lead you and your business?**

Whether you already have an established plan or are just getting started with boosting employee mental health and wellbeing, Robertson Cooper can support you to **engage your managers, inspire your teams** and **drive measurable results**.

Thanks to our pioneering academic research and more than 20 years' real-world experience, we've established an unrivalled understanding of wellbeing at work. Through **evidence-backed surveys, transformative training programmes** and **holistic wellbeing strategies**, our experts help clients all over the world create more Good Days at Work and **reap the commercial rewards**.

A photograph of a woman with short grey hair and glasses, smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The image is overlaid with large, semi-transparent numbers '3' and '4' in a teal color. The text 'Section three' is positioned within the '3' and 'Spotlight on: feeling connected' is positioned within the '4'.

Section three

Spotlight on: feeling connected



Section three: Spotlight on... feeling connected

Of all the essential elements of a Good Day at Work, **how people establish a sense of connection with others** has changed the most radically since 2020. The Good Day at Work Challenge appears to bear this out, with this element seeing the smallest improvement over the course of the week, even though there's nothing to suggest that participants tried any less hard here than they did with the other tasks. But we know that work friendships are good for happiness and productivity, **so what's going on?**

As businesses continue coming to terms with employee working locations post-Covid, it may well be that building meaningful connections with colleagues is harder today than it was in 2019. Although research so far is quite limited, some **studies have noted that remote working may have a detrimental effect on collaboration and communication.**

During the first six months of 2020, [*Yang et al \(2022\)*](#) collected data from more than 60,000 employees, finding that **remote working caused the collaboration networks of workers to become more siloed**, with fewer bridges between disparate parts of the organisation. They also identified **a dip in real-time interaction and a rise in asynchronous communication**, such as emails and messaging.

Businesses, therefore, will need to work hard to ensure they and their employees keep benefitting from strong bonds between colleagues at work, **particularly in blended or remote working environments.**



Section four

Spotlight on: leadership task achievement

Section four: Spotlight on... leadership task achievement

As part of the challenge, we organised a workshop to find out more about the Good Day at Work experiences of **50 senior leaders**. The results were exactly what we expected: **strong scores for three of the essential elements but a worryingly poor score for one.**

Consistent with our findings more generally, leaders in our workshop had **positive energy levels, got on well with their teams and peers**, and generally **felt they made a purposeful contribution** to their organisation, all of which are vital for sustainable performance. **But there was one significant area of risk: task achievement.**

In this area, the leaders in our workshop scored well below the average for the wider working population. Unfortunately, we've come to expect this – senior leaders are notoriously time poor.

We wanted to highlight the real-world impact this has on an organisation, so we conducted an analysis to link the data from our workshop to our **industry-leading 6 Essentials model**, a framework that sets out the environmental factors enabling a well workplace where employees can thrive.

Low levels of task achievement relate to three factors from the 6 Essentials model:

Resources: Do leaders have **too much work** and no one to **delegate** to?

Job Conditions: Could leaders' (and others') roles be designed differently to **enable tasks to be achieved more successfully**?

Change: Are leaders **holding on to tasks** that other team members could perform?

Our research shows that by acting upon the sources of demand and pressure across the 6 Essentials, organisations can boost the number of Good Days at Work that leaders and other employees experience.

For example, compared to those who score the worst, people with the best:

Resources and Communications have **0.95** more Good Days at Work per week

Job Conditions have **1.04** more Good Days per week

Job Security and Stability have **0.51** more Good Days per week

These findings aren't restricted just to the leaders in our challenge, they're universal. **So how well are your leaders set up to handle the pressures and demands they'll inevitably face?**



Section five

Final word from our Co-founder, **Professor Sir Cary Cooper**



Section five: Final word from our Co-founder, Professor Sir Cary Cooper

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The first Robertson Cooper Good Day at Work Challenge was a phenomenal success. We were thrilled that so many diverse organisations took part in our free initiative. It bodes well for **expanding the positive wellbeing conversation** over the coming year, and we can't wait to repeat the challenge in future.

Over the course of a single week, it also laid bare some stark truths about how simple it can be to **create meaningful change** to people's lives – and business fortunes – with just a few minutes' effort:

- ✓ Every one of us can change how they feel about work through **simple, conscious and intentional action** – in just one week!
- ✓ People sometimes need to be **reminded of their own agency**. Perhaps this is truer than ever after a few years when a lot has been imposed on us.
- ✓ **It doesn't take much effort** – our challenge asked people to take only 10 minutes of purposeful action a day.

Who doesn't want a Good Day at Work? The more we can enable, the better mental health and wellbeing we can inspire and the better business performance we can deliver – that's proven investment.

From our vast experience of helping some of the world's best brands create more Good Days at Work for their employees, **we know that one of the biggest initial fears is working out where to start**. How can you tackle such a seemingly enormous project without it being tokenistic, piecemeal and, ultimately, ineffective? **Robertson Cooper is here for you**. Our Wellbeing Specialists understand that every business is unique and are here to help you make more Good Days at Work right across your organisation.

With the support of the best minds in the industry, backed by proven research and more than two decades of practical know-how, **how many Good Days at Work could you make for your employees?**



A photograph of three women in business attire looking at a laptop screen together. The image is overlaid with a teal gradient.

Let's talk!

Are you ready to reap the **commercial rewards** of unlocking more Good Days at Work for your employees? Not sure where to start? **Get in touch** with our team of experienced Business Psychologists and Analysts today: hi@robertsoncooper.com



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